



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 927

January Session, 2011

* _____SB00927HEDED_031611_____*

AN ACT CONCERNING REQUIREMENTS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-16p of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2011*):

3 (a) As used in sections 10-16o to 10-16s, inclusive, 10-16u, 17b-749a
4 and 17b-749c:

5 (1) "School readiness program" means a nonsectarian program that
6 (A) meets the standards set by the department pursuant to subsection
7 (b) of this section and the requirements of section 10-16q, and (B)
8 provides a developmentally appropriate learning experience of not less
9 than four hundred fifty hours and one hundred eighty days for eligible
10 children, except as provided in subsection (d) of section 10-16q;

11 (2) "Eligible children" means children three and four years of age
12 and children five years of age who are not eligible to enroll in school
13 pursuant to section 10-15c, or who are eligible to enroll in school and
14 will attend a school readiness program pursuant to section 10-16t;

15 (3) "Priority school" means a school in which forty per cent or more
16 of the lunches served are served to students who are eligible for free or
17 reduced price lunches pursuant to federal law and regulations,

18 excluding such a school located in a priority school district pursuant to
19 section 10-266p or in a former priority school district receiving a grant
20 pursuant to subsection (c) of this section and, on and after July 1, 2001,
21 excluding such a school in a transitional school district receiving a
22 grant pursuant to section 10-16u;

23 (4) "Severe need school" means a school in a priority school district
24 pursuant to section 10-266p or in a former priority school district in
25 which forty per cent or more of the lunches served are served to
26 students who are eligible for free or reduced price lunches;

27 (5) "Accredited" means accredited by the National Association for
28 the Education of Young Children, a Head Start on-site program review
29 instrument or a successor instrument pursuant to federal regulations,
30 or otherwise meeting such criteria as may be established by the
31 commissioner, in consultation with the Commissioner of Social
32 Services, unless the context otherwise requires;

33 (6) "Year-round" means fifty weeks per year, except as provided in
34 subsection (d) of section 10-16q;

35 (7) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Education; and

36 (8) "Department" means the Department of Education.

37 (b) (1) The Department of Education shall be the lead agency for
38 school readiness. For purposes of this section and section 10-16u,
39 school readiness program providers eligible for funding from the
40 Department of Education shall include local and regional boards of
41 education, regional educational service centers, family resource centers
42 and providers of child day care centers, as defined in section 19a-77,
43 Head Start programs, preschool programs and other programs that
44 meet such standards established by the Commissioner of Education.
45 The department shall establish standards for school readiness
46 programs. The standards may include, but need not be limited to,
47 guidelines for staff-child interactions, curriculum content, including
48 preliteracy development, lesson plans, parent involvement, staff

49 qualifications and training, transition to school and administration.
50 The department shall develop age-appropriate developmental skills
51 and goals for children attending such programs. The commissioner, in
52 consultation with the Commissioners of Higher Education and Social
53 Services and other appropriate entities, shall develop a continuing
54 education training program for the staff of school readiness programs.

55 (2) (A) For purposes of this section, prior to July 1, 2015, "staff
56 qualifications" means there is in each classroom an individual who has
57 at least the following: [(1)] (i) A childhood development associate
58 credential or an equivalent credential issued by an organization
59 approved by the Commissioner of Education and [nine credits or
60 more, and on and after July 1, 2005,] twelve credits or more [,] in early
61 childhood education or child development, as determined by the
62 Commissioner of Higher Education, after consultation with the
63 Commissioners of Education and Social Services, from an institution of
64 higher education accredited by the Board of Governors of Higher
65 Education or regionally accredited; [(2)] (ii) an associate's degree with
66 [nine credits or more, and on and after July 1, 2005,] twelve credits or
67 more [,] in early childhood education or child development, as
68 determined by the Commissioner of Higher Education, after
69 consultation with the Commissioners of Education and Social Services,
70 from such an institution; [(3)] (iii) a four-year degree with [nine credits
71 or more, and on and after July 1, 2005,] twelve credits or more [,] in
72 early childhood education or child development, as determined by the
73 Commissioner of Higher Education, after consultation with the
74 Commissioners of Education and Social Services, from such an
75 institution; or [(4)] (iv) certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an
76 endorsement in early childhood education, [or special education, and
77 on]

78 (B) On and after July 1, 2015, "staff qualifications" means [there is in
79 each classroom an individual who has at least the following: (A) A
80 bachelor's degree in early childhood education or childhood
81 development, or in a related field approved by the Commissioner of
82 Education from an institution of higher education accredited by the

83 Board of Governors of Higher Education or regionally accredited; or
84 (B) certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an endorsement in
85 early childhood education or special education] that for each preschool
86 program accepting state funds, including school readiness funds and
87 funds from the Department of Social Services, (i) at least fifty per cent
88 of those individuals with the primary responsibility for a classroom of
89 children hold (I) certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an
90 endorsement in early childhood education, or (II) a bachelor's degree
91 in early childhood education, child study, child development or
92 human growth and development from an institution of higher
93 education accredited by the Board of Governors of Higher Education,
94 provided such associate degree program is approved by the
95 Departments of Higher Education and Education, and (ii) such
96 remaining individuals hold an associate degree in early childhood
97 education, child study, child development or human growth and
98 development from an institution of higher education accredited by the
99 Board of Governors of Higher Education, provided such associate
100 degree program is approved by the Departments of Higher Education
101 and Education.

102 (C) On and after July 1, 2020, "staff qualifications" means that for
103 each preschool program accepting state funds, including school
104 readiness funds and funds from the Department of Social Services, one
105 hundred per cent of those individuals with the primary responsibility
106 for a classroom of children hold (i) certification pursuant to section 10-
107 145b with an endorsement in early childhood education, or (ii) a
108 bachelor's degree in early childhood education, child study, child
109 development or human growth and development from an institution
110 of higher education accredited by the Board of Governors of Higher
111 Education, provided such bachelor's degree program is approved by
112 the Departments of Higher Education and Education.

113 (c) The Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the
114 Commissioner of Social Services, shall establish a grant program to
115 provide spaces in accredited school readiness programs for eligible
116 children who reside in priority school districts pursuant to section 10-

117 266p or in former priority school districts as provided in this
118 subsection. Under the program, the grant shall be provided, in
119 accordance with this section, to the town in which such priority school
120 district or former priority school district is located. Eligibility shall be
121 determined for a five-year period based on an applicant's designation
122 as a priority school district for the initial year of application, except
123 that if a school district that receives a grant pursuant to this subsection
124 is no longer designated as a priority school district at the end of such
125 five-year period, such former priority school district shall continue to
126 be eligible to receive a grant pursuant to this subsection. Grant awards
127 shall be made annually contingent upon available funding and a
128 satisfactory annual evaluation. The chief elected official of such town
129 and the superintendent of schools for such priority school district or
130 former priority school district shall submit a plan for the expenditure
131 of grant funds and responses to the local request for proposal process
132 to the Departments of Education and Social Services. The departments
133 shall jointly review such plans and shall each approve the portion of
134 such plan within its jurisdiction for funding. The plan shall: (1) Be
135 developed in consultation with the local or regional school readiness
136 council established pursuant to section 10-16r; (2) be based on a needs
137 and resource assessment; (3) provide for the issuance of requests for
138 proposals for providers of accredited school readiness programs,
139 provided, after the initial requests for proposals, facilities that have
140 been approved to operate a child care program financed through the
141 Connecticut Health and Education Facilities Authority and have
142 received a commitment for debt service from the Department of Social
143 Services pursuant to section 17b-749i, are exempt from the requirement
144 for issuance of annual requests for proposals; and (4) identify the need
145 for funding pursuant to section 17b-749a in order to extend the hours
146 and days of operation of school readiness programs in order to
147 provide child day care services for children attending such programs.

148 (d) (1) The Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the
149 Commissioner of Social Services, shall establish a competitive grant
150 program to provide spaces in accredited school readiness programs for

151 eligible children who reside (A) in an area served by a priority school
152 or a former priority school as provided for in subdivision (2) of this
153 subsection, (B) in a town ranked one to fifty when all towns are ranked
154 in ascending order according to town wealth, as defined in subdivision
155 (26) of section 10-262f, whose school district is not a priority school
156 district pursuant to section 10-266p, or (C) in a town formerly a town
157 described in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, as provided for in
158 said subdivision (2). A town in which a priority school is located, a
159 regional school readiness council, pursuant to subsection (c) of section
160 10-16r, for a region in which such a school is located or a town
161 described in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision may apply for such a
162 grant in an amount not to exceed one hundred seven thousand dollars
163 per priority school or town. Eligibility shall be determined for a five-
164 year period based on an applicant's designation as having a priority
165 school or being a town described in subparagraph (B) of this
166 subdivision for the initial year of application. Grant awards shall be
167 made annually contingent upon available funding and a satisfactory
168 annual evaluation. The chief elected official of such town and the
169 superintendent of schools of the school district or the regional school
170 readiness council shall submit a plan, as described in subsection (c) of
171 this section, for the expenditure of such grant funds to the Department
172 of Education. In awarding grants pursuant to this subsection, the
173 commissioner shall give preference to applications submitted by
174 regional school readiness councils and may, within available
175 appropriations, provide a grant in excess of one hundred seven
176 thousand dollars to towns with two or more priority schools in such
177 district. A town or regional school readiness council awarded a grant
178 pursuant to this subsection shall use the funds to purchase spaces for
179 such children from providers of accredited school readiness programs.

180 (2) (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (C) of this subdivision,
181 commencing with the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005, if a town
182 received a grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection and is
183 no longer eligible to receive such a grant, the town may receive a
184 phase-out grant for each of the three fiscal years following the fiscal

185 year such town received its final grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of
186 this subsection.

187 (B) The amount of such phase-out grants shall be determined as
188 follows: (i) For the first fiscal year following the fiscal year such town
189 received its final grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, in
190 an amount that does not exceed seventy-five per cent of the grant
191 amount such town received for the town or school's final year of
192 eligibility pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection; (ii) for the
193 second fiscal year following the fiscal year such town received its final
194 grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, in an amount that
195 does not exceed fifty per cent of the grant amount such town received
196 for the town's or school's final year of eligibility pursuant to
197 subdivision (1) of this subsection; and (iii) for the third fiscal year
198 following the fiscal year such town received its final grant pursuant to
199 subdivision (1) of this subsection, in an amount that does not exceed
200 twenty-five per cent of the grant amount such town received for the
201 town's or school's final year of eligibility pursuant to subdivision (1) of
202 this subsection.

203 (C) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011, and each fiscal year
204 thereafter, any town that received a grant pursuant to subparagraph
205 (B) of subdivision (1) of this subsection for the fiscal year ending June
206 30, 2010, shall continue to receive a grant under this subsection even if
207 the town no longer meets the criteria for such grant pursuant to
208 subparagraph (B) of subdivision (1) of this subsection.

209 (e) (1) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009, and each fiscal year
210 thereafter, priority school districts and former priority school districts
211 shall receive grants based on the sum of the products obtained by (A)
212 multiplying the district's number of contracted slots on March thirtieth
213 of the fiscal year prior to the fiscal year in which the grant is to be paid,
214 by the per child cost pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of
215 section 10-16q, except that such per child cost shall be reduced for slots
216 that are less than year-round, and (B) multiplying the number of
217 additional or decreased slots the districts have requested for the fiscal

218 year in which the grant is to be paid by the per child cost pursuant to
219 subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of said section 10-16q, except such per
220 child cost shall be reduced for slots that are less than year-round. If
221 said sum exceeds the available appropriation, such number of
222 requested additional slots shall be reduced, as determined by the
223 Commissioner of Education, to stay within the available appropriation.

224 (2) (A) If funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of
225 this section are not expended, the Commissioner of Education may
226 deposit such unexpended funds in the account established under
227 section 10-16aa and use such unexpended funds in accordance with
228 the provisions of [said] section 10-16aa.

229 (B) If funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of this
230 section are not expended, the Commissioner of Education shall use
231 such unexpended funds on and after July 1, 2012, in consultation with
232 the Commissioner of Higher Education, to support local school
233 readiness programs in satisfying the staff qualifications requirements
234 of subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this
235 section. The local school readiness programs shall use any such funds
236 to provide assistance to staff members at a maximum of five thousand
237 dollars per staff member per year for the cost of higher education
238 courses leading to a bachelor's degree in early childhood education,
239 child study, child development or human growth and development at
240 a public or independent nonprofit institution of higher education in
241 this state, provided such staff members have applied for all available
242 federal and state scholarships and grants, and such assistance does not
243 exceed such staff members' financial need. Local school readiness
244 programs shall apply for such unexpended funds in such program's
245 application for a school readiness grant pursuant to this section. The
246 Commissioner of Education shall determine, in consultation with the
247 Commissioner of Higher Education, how such unexpended funds shall
248 be distributed.

249 [(B)] (C) If funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of
250 this section are not expended pursuant to said subsection (c), [or]

251 deposited pursuant to subparagraph (A) of this subdivision, or used
252 pursuant to subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, the Commissioner of
253 Education may use such unexpended funds to support local school
254 readiness programs. The commissioner may use such funds for
255 purposes including, but not limited to, (i) assisting local school
256 readiness programs in meeting and maintaining accreditation
257 requirements, (ii) providing training in implementing the preschool
258 assessment and curriculum frameworks, including training to enhance
259 literacy teaching skills, (iii) developing a state-wide preschool
260 curriculum, (iv) developing student assessments for students in grades
261 kindergarten to two, inclusive, (v) developing and implementing best
262 practices for parents in supporting preschool and kindergarten student
263 learning, (vi) developing and implementing strategies for children to
264 transition from preschool to kindergarten, (vii) providing for
265 professional development, including assisting in career ladder
266 advancement, for school readiness staff, and (viii) providing
267 supplemental grants to other towns that are eligible for grants
268 pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

269 (3) Notwithstanding subdivision (2) of this subsection, for the fiscal
270 years ending June 30, 2008, to June 30, 2011, inclusive, the Department
271 of Education may retain up to one hundred ninety-eight thousand two
272 hundred dollars of the amount appropriated for purposes of this
273 section for coordination, program evaluation and administration.

274 (f) Any school readiness program that receives funds pursuant to
275 this section or section 10-16u shall not discriminate on the basis of race,
276 color, national origin, gender, religion or disability. For purposes of
277 this section, a nonsectarian program means any public or private
278 school readiness program that is not violative of the Establishment
279 Clause of the Constitution of the State of Connecticut or the
280 Establishment Clause of the Constitution of the United States of
281 America.

282 (g) Subject to the provisions of this subsection, no funds received by
283 a town pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-

284 16u shall be used to supplant federal, state or local funding received by
285 such town for early childhood education, provided a town may use an
286 amount determined in accordance with this subsection for
287 coordination, program evaluation and administration. Such amount
288 shall be at least twenty-five thousand dollars but not more than
289 seventy-five thousand dollars and shall be determined by the
290 Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of
291 Social Services, based on the school readiness grant award allocated to
292 the town pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-
293 16u and the number of operating sites for coordination, program
294 evaluation and administration. Such amount shall be increased by an
295 amount equal to local funding provided for early childhood education
296 coordination, program evaluation and administration, not to exceed
297 twenty-five thousand dollars. Each town that receives a grant pursuant
298 to said subsection (c) or (d) or section 10-16u shall designate a person
299 to be responsible for such coordination, program evaluation and
300 administration and to act as a liaison between the town and the
301 Departments of Education and Social Services. Each school readiness
302 program that receives funds pursuant to this section or section 10-16u
303 shall provide information to the department or the school readiness
304 council, as requested, that is necessary for purposes of any school
305 readiness program evaluation.

306 (h) For the first three years a town receives grants pursuant to this
307 section, such grants may be used, with the approval of the
308 commissioner, to prepare a facility or staff for operating a school
309 readiness program and shall be adjusted based on the number of days
310 of operation of a school readiness program if a shorter term of
311 operation is approved by the commissioner.

312 (i) A town may use grant funds to purchase spaces for eligible
313 children who reside in such town at an accredited school readiness
314 program located in another town. A regional school readiness council
315 may use grant funds to purchase spaces for eligible children who
316 reside in the region covered by the council at an accredited school
317 readiness program located outside such region.

318 (j) Children enrolled in school readiness programs funded pursuant
319 to this section shall not be counted (1) as resident students for
320 purposes of subdivision (22) of section 10-262f, or (2) in the
321 determination of average daily membership pursuant to subdivision
322 (2) of subsection (a) of section 10-261.

323 (k) Up to two per cent of the amount of the appropriation for this
324 section may be allocated to the competitive grant program pursuant to
325 subsection (d) of this section. The determination of the amount of such
326 allocation shall be made on or before August first.

327 Sec. 2. (*Effective July 1, 2011*) The Department of Higher Education,
328 in consultation with the Departments of Education and Social Services,
329 the Office of Workforce Competiveness, representatives from public
330 and independent institutions of higher education in the state, early
331 childhood education programs accepting school readiness funds
332 pursuant to section 10-16p of the general statutes, as amended by this
333 act, and any other group or organization the Department of Higher
334 Education deems appropriate, shall develop a plan for meeting the
335 requirements in subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subdivision (2) of
336 subsection (b) of section 10-16p of the general statutes, as amended by
337 this act, and strategies for retaining those individuals who do not
338 satisfy the requirements of said subparagraphs (B) and (C). Not later
339 than February 1, 2012, the department shall submit such plan, in
340 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,
341 to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
342 cognizance of matters relating to higher education and employment
343 advancement and education. Not later than February 1, 2013, and
344 annually thereafter through February 1, 2015, the Department of
345 Higher Education shall submit progress reports regarding the
346 implementation of such plan, in accordance with the provisions of
347 section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of
348 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher
349 education, employment advancement and education.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
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Section 1	<i>July 1, 2011</i>	10-16p
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2011</i>	New section

HED*Joint Favorable Subst. C/R*

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